

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

POL 14 VIETS

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 DE RUMJIR 5736 2541333
 ZNY CCCCC
 info 0 111330Z SEP 66
 S FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
 TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
 P RUMTBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE
 AH RUMNMF/AMCONSUL DANANG IMMEDIATE POLAD FRANCIS
 RUEKDA/DOD
 ZEN/AMCONSUL HUE IMMEDIATE
 RUEKDA/JCS IMMEDIATE
 AL RUALOS/AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE
 O RUMJFS/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE
 RUHLHG/CINCPAC IMMEDIATE
 SC BT
 NR C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 5736
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EXCISE

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ELECTION SITUATION REPORT: SAIGON/GIA DINH 2000

1. FINAL FIGURES FOR SAIGON/GIA DINH (ONE-FOURTH ALL REGISTERED VOTERS) SHOW THAT 69.3 PERCENT OF REGISTERED VOTERS WENT TO POLLS. PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN BY DISTRICT IS AS FOLLOWS: SAIGON I - 65.9 PERCENT; SAIGON II - 70.3 PERCENT; SAIGON III - 63.0 PERCENT; SAIGON TOTAL - 66.6 PERCENT; GIA DINH IV - 72.8 PERCENT; GIA DINH V - 73.71 PERCENT; GIA DINH TOTAL - 73.23 PERCENT.

2. TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTES ACTUALLY CAST ARE AS FOLLOWS WITH TOTAL NUMBER REGISTERED VOTERS IN ARENS:
 SAIGON I - QIENITE (278,874), SAPDNANE* 189,941 (270,201),
 SAIJSIKDIK* 143,413 (227,518); GIA DINH IV - 195,101 (268,144);
 GIA DINH V - 194,356 (263,676); SAIGON - GIA DINH TOTAL - 906,730 (1,308,413).

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TOLD EMBOFF ON TWO OCCASIONS TODAY AND ON SEVERAL PREVIOUS OCCASIONS THAT VOTING IN SAIGON WOULD BE SCRUPULOUSLY FAIR AND FREE; THAT GVN DID NOT HAVE MEANS TO APPLY MUCH PRESSURE ON PROSPECTIVE VOTERS IN CITY EVEN IF WORD HAD NOT COME DOWN FOR HONEST VOTE; AND THAT GVN INTENDED BEND OVER BACKWARDS TO BE OPEN AND HONEST IN VIEW OF LARGE NUMBER OBSERVERS FROM PRESS CORPS AND DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS. COLONEL LOAN, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NATIONAL POLICE TOLD EMBOFF SAME THING, ADDING THAT HE DID NOT KNOW HOW EITHER HIS DRIVER OR HIS WIFE VOTED. FORMER PRESIDENT OF SAIGON CITY

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

REVIEWED BY DATE 11/1/71
 PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

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-2- SAIGON 5736, SEPTEMBER 11

COUNCIL

SAID

HE FELT ELECTIONS HAD BEEN VERY FAIR, INDEED.

4. OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF ONE OF VOTING 14 BOOTHS AT POLLING PLACE NEAR CENTRAL MARKET IN SAIGON I, TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE HAD SERVED SIMILAR FUNCTION "MANY TIMES BEFORE" DURING DIEM ADMINISTRATION. HE WENT ON: "THIS IS BEST ELECTION WE HAVE EVER HAD. IN DIEM YEARS I USED TO GET ORDERS FROM GOVERNMENT TELLING ME HOW MANY VOTES EACH CANDIDATE SHOULD BE GIVEN. I KNOW OF NO SUCH ORDER THIS TIME. WE HAVE TO BE MORE CAREFUL IN REPORTING VOTE, MUST COUNT ACCURATELY AND REPORT TOTALS CORRECTLY. WE URGED PEOPLE TO COME AND VOTE BUT WE DID NOT HIGH-PRESSURE THEM. KY MIGHT PULL TRICKS IN OTHER AREAS (SIC) BUT I THINK HE AND GENERALS THIEU AND THANG ARE SINCERE ABOUT HAVING FREE ELECTION."

5. EMBOFFS WHO VISITED APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF POLLING PLACES SCATTERED THROUGHOUT CITY ON AT LEAST ONE OCCASION DURING DAY, CAN ONLY CONFIRM ABOVE STATEMENTS ON FREE AND HONEST ELECTION IN SAIGON, BASED UPON THEIR PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS. OUR OBSERVATIONS IN GIA DINH NOT AS EXTENSIVE BUT NO SIGNS OF RIGGING OR PRESSURE HAVE BEEN REPORTED.

6. OBSERVATIONS OF EMBOFF PREVIOUSLY REPORTED SUPPORT STATEMENTS BY [redacted] THAT MANY BUDDHIST INSTITUTE FAITHFUL INCLUDING MONKS, VOTED AND THAT THERE WAS NO NOTICEABLY CATHOLIC BOYCOTT, WITH LARGE NUMBERS PRIESTS COMING TO POLLS. b1
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7. COUNTING OF BALLOTS FOR SAIGON AND GIA DINH LISTS HAS BEGUN WITH PRESS AND DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES WELCOMED AS OBSERVERS. CITY HALL, WHERE COUNTING BEING CONDUCTED FOR SAIGON, IS UNDER TIGHT SECURITY GUARD.

8. COMMENT: MAYOR, WHO HAS NOT LEFT HIS OFFICE FOR FOUR DAYS, AND POLICE CHIEF MORE JUBILANT ABOUT HIGH PERCENTAGE OF VOTERS, DESPITE MANY INCIDENTS VIET CONG TERROR, BUDDHIST INSTITUTE OPPOSITION, AND ABSENCE GVN HIGH-PRESSURE TACTICS. EMBASSY AGREES THAT TURNOUT WAS IMPRESSIVE AND ELECTION APPARENTLY FREE. LODGE
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NOTE: PASSED S/S-O, WHITE HOUSE, CIA, NSA, USIA 10:26 A.M.,
9-11-66. *AS RECEIVED, WILL SERVICE UPON REQUEST.

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